AccessLetter

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Money Follows the Person Begins in Mass.



On July 1, 2011,
Massachusetts officials
began to implement Money
Follows the Person (MFP),
a federal grant program
designed to enable lowincome people with
disabilities to move out of
nursing homes into

communities of their choice, with proper support services.

MFP is a demonstration "rebalancing" program which relaxes certain federal Medicaid rules, encouraging states to reallocate Medicaid funds away from institutional care (like nursing homes) and toward community-based services.

The background of MFP dates back to 1999, when the U.S. Supreme Court issued a decision which radically altered how the various states deliver services to people with disabilities. In a case called *Olmstead vs. L.C.*, the High Court ruled that, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), states were required to provide services in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of an individual with a disability.

Under the *Olmstead* decision, states can no longer tell Medicaid recipients with disabilities who need help with daily functions like dressing and hygiene that their only choice is to live in a nursing home or similar institution. MFP is designed to help states implement *Olmstead* on an individualized basis, reflecting the needs and priorities of each state, while strengthening states' abilities to provide community-based services to people with disabilities.

Geared to maximize integration and independence for people with disabilities, MFP is one of several grant and waiver programs conducted by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Taken together,

(More on Money Follows, page 2)

Meet the New CCPD Members



In June, three new members joined the Board of the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities, having been appointed by City Manager Robert W. Healy. Please join us in welcoming our new members -- Naomi

Pinson, Miriam Cooper, and Bet MacArthur!

Naomi Pinson

Naomi Pinson is a long-term worker in the field of psychiatric rehabilitation. She is a person who has multiple psychiatric and other "mental" diagnoses (i.e. acquired brain injury.) Since 2005 she has worked predominantly in the field of human rights for psychiatric patients. Some 17 years ago, when she began doing direct care work in a MH group home, a co-worker with whom she was friendly "outed" her to both staff and residents! While her friend surely meant no harm, Naomi was upset, to say the least. This started her on a trajectory of wondering about her own reactions, of questioning, not for the first time, why she felt so mortified, and what she had learned to make her feel this way.

Subsequently, and not all at once, Naomi embraced her newfound "out" status, and eventually used it to found one of the very first Peer Support programs in the country (The Peer Educators Project of Vinfen Corporation). As a long term human services advocate and a direct action organizer, her thinking about what it means to have such a status evolved, and her advocacy sharpened. Naomi's motto, which was also that of her late father's, is: "Gladly shall ye teach and gladly shall ye learn."

Naomi feels humbled to have the opportunity to serve on the CCPD Board, and hopes to accomplish much in both directions!

(More on New Members, page 2)

Money Follows (cont. from page 1)

these are intended to help states spend their Medicaid dollars more flexibly, while giving consumers greater choice in where they may live.

Massachusetts will be receiving \$110 million over the next five years to implement MFP, including \$13 million in the first year. State officials anticipate a total of 2192 individuals with disabilities will transition under MFP from nursing homes and other institutions to community-based settings over the five years. With the addition of 13 states (including Massachusetts) to the MFP program this year, a total of 40 states and the District of Columbia are now participating in the demonstration grant. Originally conceived by CMS in 2005, MFP was extended for five years as part of the sweeping health-care reform law called the Affordable Care Act signed into law by President Obama last year.

In order to qualify for the Massachusetts MFP program,

an individual with a disability must be a resident of the state, be Medicaid-eligible and must have resided in a nursing home or other inpatient facility for 90 or more consecutive days. Adults and seniors (18 and over) determined to be eligible for MFP must consent to transitioning to a community-based residential setting, such as an apartment or other home. Group

homes are eligible, but only if they

have fewer than five residents.

Individuals who will benefit from the home-and-community based services provide under MFP include seniors and people with intellectual, sensory, developmental and/or physical disabilities, mental illness, and brain injury, among other conditions. Charles Carr, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, stated, "Our cross-disability approach will greatly advance our efforts to make sure that people in institutional settings, regardless of their disability, have the opportunity to move to the community."

Starting in 2012, expanded support services available under MFP will include behavioral health services, peer counseling, personal care services, homemaker services, transportation, home modifications, and assistive technology.

For more info on MFP, visit www.mass.gov/hhs/communityfirst or call CCPD.

New Members (cont. from page 1)

Miriam Cooper

Miriam Cooper grew up in Connecticut, went to high school in Massachusetts, and bounced around Montreal and Toronto for a decade or so. She has lived in Cambridge for two years and is currently finishing up her protracted undergrad at Harvard Extension School. When she's not at Diesel Cafe cramming for an exam at the last possible minute, Miriam works as a part-time contract employee for the MBTA's Department of System-Wide Accessibility.

Miriam is blind and uses a guide dog for mobility. She is interested in and has actively advocated for public-transit accessibility, accessible

dog handlers. She has testified in front of the Toronto Human Rights Commission and the Cambridge License Commission regarding taxis and denial of access to customers with service dogs, and she has given presentations on disability in both educational and professional environments. She is proud to have been appointed

urban spaces, and access rights for service

to the Cambridge
Commission for Persons with
Disabilities and looks forward
to further opportunities to
contribute to her community.

Bet MacArthur

Bet MacArthur is a clinical social worker in private practice, a community organizer, and a writer focusing on film, popular culture and diversity theory. She also works as a marketing and business development consultant, is editor of a monthly column, "Clinical Practice Today," for the MA Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, and is Chair of "Disability Reframed," a public film series sponsored by CCPD. Bet has been involved in human rights activism since the early 1960's, served on the Board of the CCPD in the past, including as Chair for one term, and after a period off the Board, has recently been appointed for a new term at CCPD.

Autism Research Study Announced

Researchers at Children's Hospital Boston are working together to study the causes of autism spectrum disorders (ASD). ASDs are associated with social, communication and behavioral challenges. The condition is called a "spectrum" because these challenges can vary from person to person from mild to severe. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) states that about 1 in 110 children in the United States has an ASD. This condition also occurs 4 times more often in boys than in girls and can be seen in families of all races, ethnicities and income levels.

Currently, a very thorough developmental exam is needed to diagnose an ASD and studies have shown that early intervention works best when started at as young an age as possible. Although an ASD diagnosis can be made as early as 2 years of age in some children, many children are not diagnosed until they are much older. Therefore, this study's goals are to find the

genetic causes of ASD and create a blood test to diagnose this condition earlier. Children's Hospital hopes that this will allow children to benefit from early intervention services sooner.

The study, which does not require travel to Children's Hospital and takes less than 2 hours to complete, is seeking individuals who either have ASD or are a family member of someone who does. Participants are asked questions about their family and medical history and are also asked to provide a blood or saliva sample. There is no cost

to participate and both children and adults can be enrolled in the study.

If you would like to hear more about the study, please contact study coordinator Caitlin Kreitman at **(Toll Free) 1-866-982-5827** or at <caitlin.kreitman@childrens.harvard.edu>. Find on Facebook – "Autism Genetics Research at Children's Hospital Boston". For more information about autism spectrum disorders, please see the CDC's "Facts About ASDs" at <www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/facts.html>.

Upcoming Events of Interest to the Disability Community (See end of Calendar for all weekly/recurring events)

- Aug. 3 **Boston Landmarks Orchestra Presents FREE "Breaking Down Barriers" Concert Series** Partnering with the Multi-Cultural Independent Living Center of Boston, Landmarks Orchestra has launched a new initiative for its 2011 season Breaking Down Barriers to provide free, accessible concerts every Wednesday at 7:00pm through August 31 by removing barriers for people with visual, hearing, and mobility disabilities. The concerts will be held at the Hatch Shell on Boston's Esplanade (near the Charles/MGH Redline T Station), and the Orchestra will provide Braille and large print programs, and sign language interpreters will be present for its August 3rd concert in collaboration with the Boston Lyric Opera. There will be a drop off location on site at the Hatch Shell, and designated disability parking spots will be available along Storrow Drive and Beacon Street near Arlington Street.
- Aug. 6 **Disability Reframed: A Community Film Series presents "The Waterdance"** Join us for a FREE screening of "The Waterdance", an autobiographical tale of the film's writer/director, Neal Jimenez life following a spinal cord injury. Starring Eric Stoltz, Wesley Snipes, and Helen Hunt, the screening will be followed by an open-forum discussion led by John Kelly of Boston. This screening will be held from 2pm to 5pm at the Citywide Senior Center, 806 Massachusetts Ave. in Central Square, Cambridge. This is a free public event; bring your friends! The site is wheelchair accessible. No need to RSVP. For questions, contact the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities at 617-349-4692 (Voice), 617-492-0235 (TTY) or email kthurman@cambridgema.gov or follow "Disability Reframed: A Community Film Series" on Facebook.
- Aug. 11 **Spaulding Riders Club** This is a new community cycling club that is consciously inclusive of athletes with physical disabilities and seeks to help those members find the right assistive devices for them to enjoy cycling recreation on a regular basis. The Club will be hosting rides, which are open to everyone regardless of disability status, every other Thursday from Memorial Day to Labor. Please see listing under "Weekly & Recurring Events" for more details.

- Aug. 18 **Spaulding Riders Club** Please see Thursday listing under "Weekly & Recurring Events" for details.
- Sept. 8 **Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) Monthly Meeting** meets in the 2nd floor conference room at 51 Inman Street, Cambridge from 5:30pm-7pm on the 2nd Thursday of each month, unless a holiday, with opportunity for public comment (note that CCPD will NOT be meeting in August). Call 617-349-4692 (voice) or 617-492-0235 (TTY) or email kthurman@cambridgema.gov for more information or to request accommodations.
- Sept. 18 **The Boston Museum of Fine Arts Opens its New Contemporary Wing with FREE Admission and Inclusive Activities** The MFA will open its new Contemporary Wing, offering free admission for all visitors and inclusive family activities from 10am to 4:45pm for all ages and abilities, including an American Sign Language (ASL)-interpreted Family Tour, a guided tour in Spanish, an ASL Tour with no spoken English, and a Feeling For Form tour for blind and low vision visitors. Pre-registration is required for the Feeling For Form tour. For more information, see <www.mfa.org>, or contact Valerie Burrows at 617-369-3302 or <vburrows@mfa.org>. The MFA is located at 465 Huntington Avenue in Boston, and is accessible by the Green line "E" train to the "Museum of Fine Arts" stop, or the Orange line train to the "Ruggles" stop.
- Sept. 23 **Products and Technologies that Changes People's Lives: Universal Design and Assistive Technology in Massachusetts** This day-long event, which consists of a conference, expo, design competition and summit, was born from the vision of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) to elevate assistive and inclusive technologies to a whole new level of significance in the Commonwealth. The Institute for Human Centered Design is the convener of the events of the day, which will showcase state-of-the-art and evolving technologies and products for people with disabilities and older people, for consumers, employers, educators, and others to demonstrate how emerging and cutting edge technology can improve the ability to work, live, learn and play across the spectrum of ability and age. The agenda for all events will have four thematic areas: Home, Work, Life-Long Learning, and Fitness/Recreation/Sport. This event will be held at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston. For more information, call 617-695-1225, ext.235 (voice/TTY), email <info@ChangePeoplesLives.org>, or go to <www.ChangePeoplesLives.org>.

Weekly & Recurring Events

Ongoing

Free Fun Fridays – Sponsored by the Highland Street Foundation, this program invites Massachusetts residents and tourists to attractions every Friday through August 26 with FREE admission. No registration is required, just visit and enjoy! For more information, see <www.highlandstreet.org>, or call 617-969-8900. Schedule of free admission offerings is:

<u>August 5th</u>: Institute of Contemporary Art, Cape Cod Children's Museum, Springfield Museums, and the Concord Museum.

August 12th: JFK Library & Museum, Arnold Arboretum, Tanglewood, and Stone Zoo.

<u>August 19th</u>: Boston Harbor Islands, Children's Museum in Easton, USS Constitution Museum, and the Basketball Hall of Fame.

<u>August 22nd</u>: Franklin Park Zoo, The Sports Museum, Norman Rockwell Museum, and Peabody Essex Museum.

<u>August 26th</u>: Old Sturbridge Village, New Repertory Theatre, Berkshire Museum, and Ecotarium.

Injured Worker Support Meetings –<u>Meetings</u> are scheduled by appointment, often the 1st Wednesday of the month, 5:15 - 6:45 pm, but other times can be arranged. Meetings/appointments usually take place at 650

Beacon Street, Kenmore Square, Boston, 4th Floor Conference Room (close to the Kenmore Square MBTA station, a few doors to the right of Barnes & Noble). RSI Action volunteers answer questions and provide resources and support, including the opportunity to view their provider evaluation book, to people with RSIs (Repetitive Strain Injuries) or other workplace injuries. Discussion topics have included medical treatment, insurance/legal issues, and speech recognition software. For more information or to set up a meeting, call 617-247-6827, or go to <www.rsiaction.org>.

Learn to Sail with Modified Sailboats and Adaptive Support! – Offered by the Department of Recreation's (DCR) Universal Access Program (UAP), this is an opportunity for persons with disabilities and their guests to learn to sail on the Charles River in Boston with the use of specialized, accessible sailboats and transfer equipment, as well as staff assistance to get in and out of the boats, and sailing instruction, all for just \$1.00! Several seat configurations are available for people with various disabilities. Reserved sessions, usually an hour in length can be customized to meet individual needs and can consist of a short sailboat ride for therapeutic recreation or a more learn-to-sail class structure, leading to ratings and expanded sailing privileges. Summer hours run through August 28 and are: Monday-Friday 10am-5pm, and weekends from 10am-3pm. Fall hours (August 29-October 2) are: Monday-Friday 1pm-5pm, and weekends 10am-3pm. For more information or to register (required), call Community Boating Inc. at 617-523-1038, or see www.community-boating.org.

Mondays

NAMI Connection – a support group for adults with mental illness sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, meets <u>every</u> Monday, 1-2:30 p.m. at the Cambridge Somerville Recovery Learning Center, 153 South St, 2nd Floor in Somerville. The group is free and open to all who self-identify as having a mental illness, regardless of diagnosis. For more information, contact Janel Tan at 617-863-5388 or <tanj@vinfen.org>.

NAMI Support Group for Caregivers –Sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, this is a free support group for family members, friends and other caregivers of persons with mental illness that provides understanding, comfort, hope and help. This group meets on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month at 7:30pm at the Cambridge Hospital Learning Center A, 3rd Floor, 1493 Cambridge Street. For more information, see <www.namimass.org/programs>, email <helpline@namimass.org>, or call Elizabeth at 781-646-0397.

Tuesdays

Boston Voice Users – this group for people who use or are interested in using speech recognition or dictation software meets from 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. on the <u>2nd Tuesday</u> of each month at MIT in Building 2, Rm.135. Members explore the developments, available tools and products, and best use of personal computer-based speech-recognition, and invite both commercial and noncommercial entities to present at meetings. To find out more about meetings and discussions go to <www.bostonvoiceusers.org>.

Wednesdays

Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA (AACT) meets 1 – 3 p.m. at the State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, 2nd floor Conference Room #2 on the 4th Wednesday of each month. Call 617-973-7507 voice or 617-973-7089 TTY or email <aact@ctps.org> for more information or to request interpreters. Security measures require proper ID for access to meetings.

DBSA-Boston (Depression Bipolar Support Alliance of Boston) Support Group meets <u>every Wednesday</u> evening, 7 - 9 p.m. at McLean Hospital in Belmont (de Marneffe Building, 1st floor lobby). Includes a lecture on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays. Call 617-855-2795 or see <www.dbsaboston.org> for more information.

Access to Art: Explorations – Offered by the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston, this is an interactive, multidisciplinary evening workshop that meets at 6pm in the Huntington Avenue Entrance Lobby on the <u>first Wednesday</u> of the month for adults with disabilities, with a focus on cognitive disabilities and disabilities that may affect verbal communication. This program is always multi-sensory and does not require one to be verbal. This program was developed with the intention of having it be as inclusive as possible, thus friends and family members are welcome and encouraged to come and take part. This program is led by a facilitator with

experience in both art and theatre and one or more musicians. This program is NOT for groups, and <u>advance notice is appreciated</u>. For more information, see <www.mfa.org> or contact Valarie Burrows at 617-369-3302 or Hannah Goodwin at 617-369-3189, or e-mail <access@mfa.org>.

Feeling for Form Introductory Tour of MFA for blind & low vision visitors – The Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston offers a series of introductory one-on-one guided tours to the Museum and its collections for blind and low vision individuals who want to build a deeper relationship with the Museum. Each monthly session focuses on a different collection and includes wayfinding and verbal description of spaces. These tours are given on the 1st Sunday of the month at 10:30 am and the <u>3rd Wednesday</u> at 6:30 pm. Individuals can attend one or more sessions, whichever interests them. Guided tours can also be scheduled at other times. Pre-registration is not required unless a visitor needs a sighted guide or other access accommodation. Contact Valerie Burrows at 617-369-3302 or <vburrows@mfa.org> to register. Call 617-369-3189 or email <access@mfa.org> or go to <www.mfa.org> for more information. The MFA is located at 465 Huntington Avenue in Boston, and is accessible by the Green line "E" train to the "Museum of Fine Arts" stop, or the Orange line train to the "Ruggles" stop.

Free introductory tour of MFA in sign language & with assistive listening devices –A new monthly offering at the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing. These tours will be given at 6:30 pm on the <u>2nd Wednesday</u> of each month. No pre-registration is required; meet at the Sharf Visitor Center in the MFA. For more information about accessible programs Valerie Burrows at 617-369-3302 voice, 617-267-9703 TTY or email <access@mfa.org>.

Open Support Group for Adults on the Autism Spectrum – Meets on the <u>2nd Wednesday</u> of each month, 7-8:30 pm at the offices of the Autism Association of New England (AANE), 85 Main St., Suite 101, Watertown, MA. Hosted by Jamie Freed; a \$5 donation is suggested. RSVP to 617-393-3824, x310 or <Jamie.Freed@aane.org>.

Rainbow Support Group for Adults with Developmental Disabilities – Funded by Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong and the Department of Developmental Services, and hosted by Cambridge Family & Children's Service (CFCS), this group provides an opportunity for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex individuals with developmental challenges to find their voice, be heard and supported in a safe, friendly environment. Participants must be at least 22 years old. Meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, 4:30 to 6:00pm at CFCS, 60 Gore Street, Cambridge, which is accessible by taking the MBTA Green Line to the Lechmere station. For more information, contact Peter Montalto at pmontalto@helpfamilies.org or 617-876-4210, x158.

Senior Support Group for Caregivers over 60 – meets on the <u>3rd Wednesday</u> of each month at the Family Resource Center, 20 Gould Street in Reading. Share and learn with other seniors who have adult family members with developmental disabilities. For meeting times or more information, contact Judy SantaMaria at 781-942-4888, x4022 or <familysupport@theemarc.org>.

Thursdays

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) Monthly Meeting – meets on the 2nd Thursday, unless a holiday, of each month at 51 Inman Street, 2nd floor Conference Room, 5:30 to 7 p.m. (NOTE: CCPD is NOT meeting in August) with opportunity for public comment. Call 617-349-4692 or email kthurman@cambridgema.gov for more information or to request accommodations.

DBSA-Boston (Depression Bipolar Support Alliance of Boston) Support Group – meets at Mass. General Hospital <u>every</u> Thursday, 7 - 9 p.m. in the Schiff Conference Center Room, Suite 4A on the 4th floor in the Yawkey Building. Follow the signs. Meetings are free and open to public. For more information call 617-855-2795 or email <mphgroup@dbsaboston.org>.

Spaulding Riders Club – This is a new community cycling club that is consciously inclusive of athletes with physical disabilities and seeks to help those members find the right assistive devices for them to enjoy cycling

recreation on a regular basis. The Club will be hosting rides, which are open to everyone regardless of disability status, every other Thursday from Memorial Day to Labor Day (August 11 & 26). Cyclists meet at the Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital Boston Pier, 125 Nashua Street in Boston (near the MBTA North Station) at 5:30pm and rides begin at 6:00pm. If you have your own cycle, no reservations are necessary - just come and join the community. For more information or if you are an athlete with a physically disability who has already been fitted to an adaptive cycle and would like to rent a cycle for a nominal fee of \$5.00 per Club session, please call 508-833-4167 or email <mpatstone@partners.org> 48 hours prior to the club outing dates listed below. Cycles are available by reservation only on a first come first served basis.

Saturdays

Boston Acquired Brain Injury Support Group (BABIS) – The mission of this free support group is to provide a positive forum for peer socialization, hope and education for people with acquired brain injury, their family and friends. This group is held on the 1st Saturday of the month, from 10am-12pm at Spaulding Rehab Hospital, conference rooms 8A & AB, 125 Nashua Street, Boston. No registration required, just show up! For more information, call Sally Johnson at 617-573-2539, email <a href="mailto:sally_johnson_step="mailto:sall

Sundays

Feeling for Form Introductory Tour of MFA for blind & low vision visitors –These tours are given on the <u>1st Sunday</u> of the month at 10:30 am. Pre-registration is not required for the Sunday tours unless a sighted guide or other access accommodation is needed. See Wednesday listing for details.

Access Notice: The City of Cambridge and Commission for Persons with Disabilities do not discriminate on the basis of disability. This **Access***Letter* newsletter is available in e-mail, large print and other alternative formats upon request. To add your name to our mailing list, to inquire about alternative formats, or for information about other auxiliary aids and services or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, contact CCPD.

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Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities

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